



Third meeting of the Parties to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes, Madrid, 26-28 November 2003

Statement by Elena SIDASH, Belarus

Mr. Chairman,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me first of all on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Belarus thank the Secretariat, the Bureau and the Spanish Government for their support to enable the participation of the Republic of Belarus in the 3d Meeting of the Parties to the Water Convention.

The Republic of Belarus became a part of the Water Convention in April of 2003 according to the Decree of the President of the Republic of Belarus. So this is our first MOP.

The international cooperation in the frame of the Water Convention is based on basin principles according to the bilateral and multilateral Agreements. Belarus concluded bilateral agreements on the protection of transboundary watercourses with Russian Federation and Ukraine in 2002. We have a very active cooperation with Poland on joint protection, use and monitoring of Neman and Bug watercourses. Now the triangular agreements with Latvia and Russia on the protection of West Dvina basin and with Lithuania and Russia on the protection of Neman basin are being prepared. Besides Belarus and Lithuania actively cooperate in the field of the joint actions in case of emergency situations.

Swedish Agency on nature protection is sponsoring the project on assessment of the basins of West Dvina and Neman. Our Republic participates in the TACIS projects such as "The management of the West Dvina water system", "The management of the West Bug water system", "The reducing of the agricultural impact on the Neman water system", "The plan of the management of the basin of Pripyat river".

The legal framework for the water resource management forms the Water Code of Belarus, which covers a wide range of tasks, directed to rational use and protection of water resources. This Code is based on the principles of the Water Convention. The state policy with regard to water resources is oriented to improvement of the situation established in the country with the use and protection of water. Now the Programme on introducing the principles of the Water Convention is being elaborated. We are thinking about the creation of the Ministerial Council responsible for the fulfillment of the provisions of the Convention.

We hope that this Meeting will help us to enrich our practice in management of water resources and to use the experience of other countries.

Thank you very much again.